



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release JANUARY 29, 1958

#### COMMERCIAL FISH CATCH AND PACK SHOW DECLINE

Preliminary reports issued today at the Department of the Interior indicate that for the calendar year 1957:

The total catch of commercial fish was 4.8 billion pounds, or 425 million pounds below the record catch of 5.25 billion pounds made in 1956;

Slightly more than 300 million pounds of the decrease was in the industrial fish category and approximately 125 million pounds was in food fish;

The food fish catch was 2.68 billion pounds and the industrial fish catch was 2.12 billion pounds;

According to late data compiled by the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the decline in the menhaden catch was responsible for most of the catch loss. Menhaden is the principal industrial fish and the catch was about 400 million pounds below the record catch of last year.

The following species of food fishes showed decreases: (in millions of pounds) haddock, 19; salmon, 58; Pacific sardines, 29; tuna, 30; ocean perch, 19.

These decreases were compensated partly by increases in the catch of other fish. The species showing increases and the gains in millions of pounds are: industrial fish other than menhaden, 74; whiting, 24; Maine herring, 14; Alaska herring, 7; jack mackerel, 11; Pacific mackerel, five. The big drop in salmon came in the Alaska area where the catch was down 65 million pounds below 1956. The salmon catch in the Pacific Coast States was up 7 million pounds. The Puget Sound pink salmon run, which occurs only on odd-numbered years, was responsible for this gain.

The total shrimp catch, especially in Louisiana, was lower than in the previous year.

The total canned pack of fish used for human food was 31 million pounds less than the 658 million pounds of 1956;

The pack of Alaska salmon, anchovies, Pacific sardines, and Gulf shrimp was considerably lower than in the previous year while the tuna pack was down less than one half of one percent;

The Alaska salmon pack of 2,458,000 standard cases was close to the record low of 1955 when only 2,385,000 standard cases were canned. The 1957 decrease was the result of a decline in the runs. The 1957 salmon pack in the Pacific Coast States was 742,000 standard cases compared with 482,000 standard cases in 1956. The odd year pink run in Puget Sound accounts for the increase.

The total tuna pack was only slightly lower than in 1956 despite the fact that the Pacific Coast output was down 336,000 cases. An increase of 289,000 cases on the east and gulf coasts and in territorial production brought the tuna pack to 11,787,000 standard cases, close to the 1956 figure. Output of Maine sardines--2,117,000 cases--was down five percent while the output of California sardines--471,000 cases--dropped 38 percent.

The total Gulf shrimp pack dropped from 905,000 cases in 1956 to 552,000 cases in 1957. This big decline was due to the failure of the small shrimp used for canning to make its appearance in its usual habitat in the Louisiana inshore waters.

x x x